

fascinating to see the ice creeping inch by inch out into the water, threatening to keep us winter-bound if we did not move on.

### *New Objectives*

From the beginning of camp in 1925 there had been high standards regarding cleanliness, tidiness and general behaviour. To all appearances, from the standpoint of physical organization, the camp was going well. The camper's day was filled with instruction of one kind or another and she was having a thoroughly good time.

There were many new trends in camping at this time. For instance, much more consideration was being given to the needs of the individual child. She was no longer fitted into a regimented camp programme, but the programme was being built around her.

There were other forces at work too which revolutionized my thinking, opened new vistas, and sent me in search of the whole truth. I saw that my responsibility toward the camper was much greater than I had ever realized, and that the spiritual element was an integral part of camp life. I began to look on the world in a new light and face the realities of our society of the twentieth century — realities such as declining standards, the emphasis on material things, and the lack of concern for the needs and aspirations of the other person and the other nation. I saw how important it was to live our lives in relation to these needs. It required vision, insight and a wisdom beyond human wisdom.

It was no longer enough for us to provide a safe, healthy, happy summer for the children. We had to do that, but at the same time, we needed to give them a purpose beyond personal enjoyment and satisfaction which would make them responsible members of society.

At camp, since children were thrown together with

strangers, the first need would be to find the answer to cliques, criticism and loneliness in a strange environment. We started with our flag service to relate our objective to daily living. We enlarged our aim and put it on paper. It read:

Our aim is not merely to give our camper a healthy, happy summer and a type of education which can be gained only from a life in the open, but to develop in her a spiritual discipline which will enable her to live effectively with other people and make a positive contribution to her country.

This aim made high demands on all of us, from the director to the youngest camper. Of course, each of us failed many times, but the objective still stood. As we lived together throughout the summer, we realized that it could shape for every one of us a permanent philosophy that would stand us in good stead throughout our lives and direct us to the answers to all problems life might bring.

We did not emphasize specific denominational ideas, but we did put our emphasis on faith in God and reliance on Him. From such a reliance we believed would naturally come a right relationship with people and standards of truth and goodwill. I believe that this awareness of the reality of God *did* result in a rare sense of freedom and joy.

Gradually the new policy left its mark on all the activities of the day, from the flag raising to taps. A new democratic viewpoint was being developed with the aim of bringing out the best in the individual camper.

#### *Health and Safety*

It was believed in the early years of organized camping that good, nourishing food and living in the open, would

in themselves result in better health. The health of a camper was often judged by her gain in weight.

Now camps emphasize more and more a balanced diet, more sleep at night, more rest in the daytime and a slower tempo.

The few rules made in camp had to do with health and safety, and it was the individual responsibility of every counsellor and staff member to see that these rules were adhered to without fail.

There was constant vigilance on the waterfront. The first requisite in each activity was to see that the camper became familiar with the safety rules and put them into practice.

With a medical staff, a dispensary and infirmary, a telephone and a Park plane available in case of emergency, we felt the foreseeable emergencies were under control.

The doctor checked the campers and their health records during the first few days of camp, and when he was satisfied that all was well the nurses were left in charge and he was "on call." His cottage was within ten minutes' run from camp by motorboat. It fell to the lot of the cabin counsellor to be on watch for the slightest upset — cold, headache, sign of fatigue or listlessness — among her cabin group and refer it to the nurse, no matter how trivial the ailment might seem.

The Head Nurse was in charge of health and sanitation. In the capacity of supervisor of health, she undertook to make clear to counsellors and campers alike, the necessity for sufficient sleep and rest, and other matters pertaining to health. Hers was the final word in deciding whether a camper was fit to go on a canoe trip.

The camper herself had many health problems to face each day. She must establish regular habits of personal hygiene and cleanliness, learn to keep herself warm and dry in rainy weather, wear proper clothing for the various

## THE CALL OF ALGONQUIN

activities, have a good attitude regarding eating, sleeping and exercise, and observe safety rules for herself and others. A camp is one of the few organizations which has the total environment of the child under supervision, and in consequence has an unusual opportunity to contribute to the camper's experience of healthful living and help her establish health habits and attitudes.

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## CHAPTER 7

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### *Organization*

ONE of the first and most important tasks one faces in running a camp is the planning of its organization.

Each member of the staff, no matter how great or small her responsibilities may be, should know exactly what is expected of her. Clear-cut organization is essential for the smooth operation of a camp.

The chart on page 51 is not a picture of the plan on which we began, but rather that which developed over the years.

After all our early experiments and the gradual assimilation of what the years had taught us, it emerged as the best of what we had experienced, and was the framework by which the camp proceeded for the last few years of my time there.

The director, as head of the camp, was of necessity ultimately responsible for everyone in camp and for everything that happened, and consequently must be kept informed. Any decision about the camp as a whole or a change of policy could be made only with her consent.

Along with the director worked a council composed of a programme co-ordinator and the four section or tribal heads. The programme co-ordinator worked in close co-operation with the tribal and activity heads, weaving in as best she could the special requests of each tribe.

Tribal heads were in charge of the different age groups. Each tribe was housed in a group of cabins in its own section of the camp, each cabin accommodated five to seven campers and there was a counsellor in charge of each. The junior cabins were long buildings divided into three, by partitions with connecting doors. The central unit housed the counsellors, the campers lived at either end. In the older group the counsellors had their own cabins with the campers' cabins on either side.

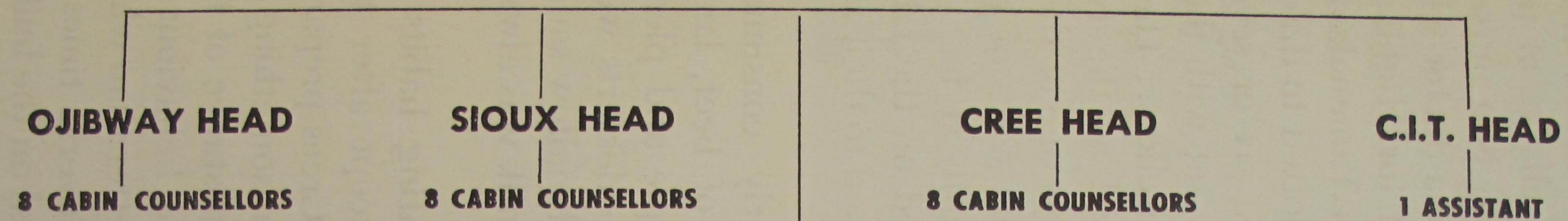
The tribal head was responsible for seeing that her cabin counsellors knew, understood and carried out the policies and procedures of the camp. She was also responsible for satisfactory living arrangements in the tribe, for scheduling the tribal counsellors' duties, for council fire discussions and for tribal meetings of campers. In the latter the Little Chief took the meeting but the tribal head remained in the background and acted in the capacity of adviser. The campers were encouraged to work out the problems of their own group and to participate in the planning of their own activities.

The cabin counsellor was entrusted with the care, development and happiness of the members of her cabin and served in the capacity of guardian, counsellor and friend to each one.

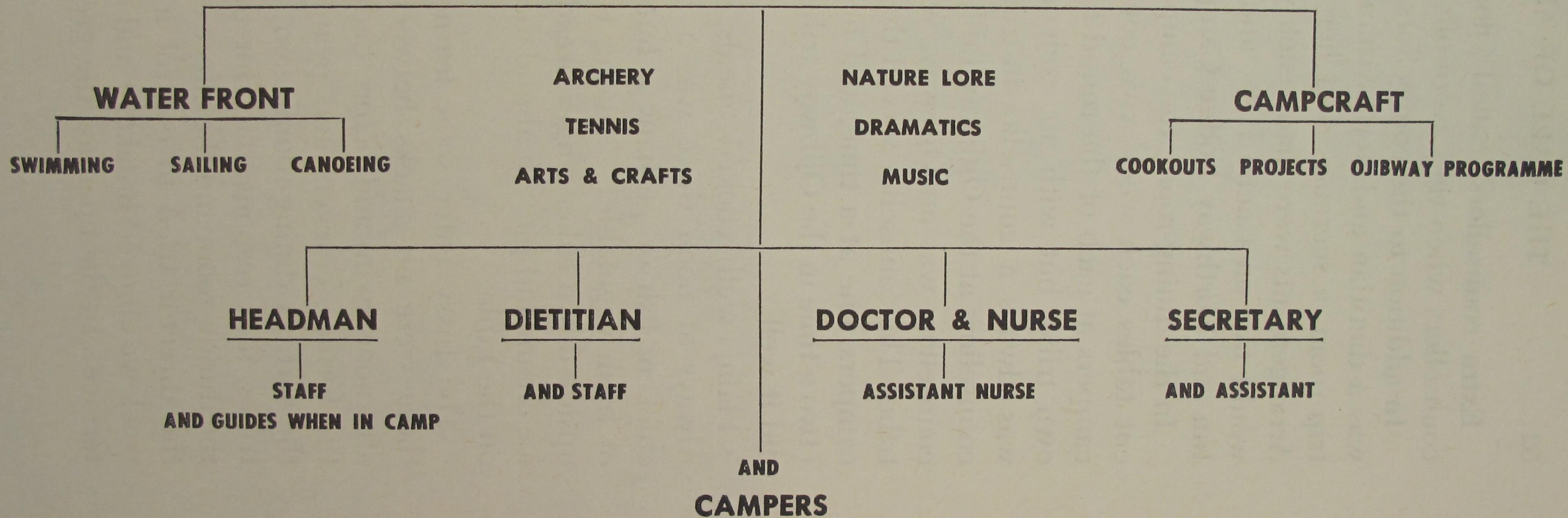
The cabin counsellor was not with her group all day, but she kept in touch with them throughout the day and knew whether they were busy and happy according to their needs and interests. She was with them in the evening and on Sunday. She went with them on cookouts and expeditions of all kinds.

Each counsellor played two roles: she was in charge of a cabin and she taught an activity. The activity heads were responsible for organizing and teaching the activity and for seeing that their assistants knew the methods of teaching and the standards required in each skill.

**DIRECTOR**  
WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF  
**TRIBAL HEADS**



**PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATOR**  
AND  
**HEADS OF ACTIVITIES**



Extra counsellors, called "floaters," took the place of counsellors when they were off duty.

In addition to the counsellors already mentioned, there was a dietitian and her assistant who took charge of the trip room, a secretary and her assistant and two nurses. Arrangements were made each year to have a doctor who would live on Cache Lake and be on call for Highland Inn and Northway Lodge Camp as well as Tanamakoon.

In the dining-room, the campers were allotted to different tables each week, two counsellors and six or seven campers at each of the round tables. They sat with their own tribe, but with an exchange of counsellors. There was always a counsellor-in-training as well as the two counsellors at the Ojibway tables and always one of these counsellors was an Ojibway, who knew the ways of the tribe. The counsellor served the meal in family style. The campers, one at a time, and in turn, waited on the table (two at a time in the Ojibway tribe). They liked to do it and did it well.

Plain, well cooked meals were eagerly consumed. Always at noon there was a hot dinner of beef, lamb, chicken, fish or perhaps a humble meat pie and plenty of fresh vegetables. Among the favourite desserts were upside-down cake, ginger bread with marshmallow sauce, ice cream and pie. An abundance of fresh milk was always on the table.

The fussy eater soon learned good eating habits as there were no snacks between meals except after the afternoon swim and before bedtime. The Crees prepared the former, crackers and peanut butter or something of the sort. A dining-room team, with the assistance of the tribes, took responsibility for the order and behaviour in the dining-room and the effect was much better than when the director tried to control it herself. Several times a week we enjoyed breakfast and evening meal on the buffet terrace. In the open air the great hot kettles of pork and



*The view from . . .*

1.68



*The Cree cabins*



*New and shy  
A budding artist*



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